

THE OCCURRENCE OF THE CALLIDINI TRIBE (COL.: CERAMBYCIDAE) IN THE BRITISH ISLES

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Introduction

THIS little group of British Longhorn Coleoptera includes some of our smaller but most beautiful beetles. All four are to a major or minor extent destructive to external woodwork, although present-day methods of treating unstripped timber has reduced the considerable damage that can be caused by these insects.

Alphabetical symbols used are those advocated by Balfour-Browne (Kaufmann, 1989): italicised letters mean that the distribution is widespread and those in parentheses indicate doubtful or unconfirmed records; a dagger (†) signifies an importation.

Callidium violaceum L.

The range of this beetle stretches from Cornwall and then along the coastal counties of the Channel, East Anglia, and the central Midlands to as far north as Cumberland. There is a Welsh record and a few from Ireland, but the beetle has not been reported from Scotland.

ENGLAND: BD *BK* (BX) CB CH CU DM† DT DY EC EK EN *ES EX EY† GE* GW HT L LN *LR* LS MX NH *NM* NO NS NW OX SD *SE SH SL† SR* ST WK WN WO WS WW WX.

WALES: GM.

IRELAND: AN† DU SK.

The larva of this species is a pest; it is found in the dried bark of dead beech, birch, juniper, larch, oak, maple, Scots pine, silver fir, spruce and fruit trees on which it feeds beneath the bark, and more particularly where the growths are used with their bark intact in the manufacture of "rustic" outdoor fittings, such as summer houses, garden seats, pergolas, palisades, etc. Duffy (1953) questions its presence in the bark of alder and willow. The damage is superficial but it causes the bark to loosen and fall off, completely spoiling the appearance of the products the larvae infest; standing timber does not seem to be attacked. The larva is sometimes present in great numbers in stacked, unstripped poles and logs in timber mills and completed outdoor furniture makers' stocks. It is very occasionally found in stripped finished woodwork.

The larva is parasitised by the Ichneumons, *Coleocentrus caligatus* Grav, and *Ephialtes manifestor* L., and by the Braconids, *Doryctus striatellus* Nees, *Helcon aequator* Nees, *H. carinator* Nees, *H. dentator* F., *H. rusparator* Nees. A possible parasite is the fly *Stevenia umbratica* Flin.

The life cycle is variable and may last from two to three years, pupation

taking place in the brood wood, with the adults emerging from April until July — there is a very early record for February — when they are about until August. The beetle visits hawthorn blossom but is more usually taken off old posts and railings, and, of course, the finished goods it spoils.

C. violaceum is a local, sometimes very common beetle which varies in colour from a typical shining blue-violet to green (v. *virescens* Stierlin) or purple (v. *salessei* Pic).

Pyrrhidium sanguineum L.

Forty-five years ago, based on records that had been published over the previous years, an attempt was made to show that this species was not a beetle indigenous to this country (Kaufmann, 1944). He was wrong: a few years later (Lloyd, 1950; Allen & Lloyd, 1951) this scarce, beautiful scarlet insect, clothed in iridescent red pubescence, and illustrated by Donovan in the early 1800s, was rediscovered in a very ancient forest area in Moccas Park, thus corroborating the comments on pabulum made by Curtis (1830) and Stephens (1831). Since the late Mr Lloyd's observations, there is solid evidence that the beetle now occurs in a few isolated localities in similar habitats, where if undisturbed it may continue to extend its range. Its distribution was formerly largely confined to the south-west, some of the western counties and Wales. Of course, some of the older records are certainly of importations, but *Pyrrhidium* is now very vulnerable and on the list of endangered Cerambycids (Shirt, 1987). If it is to survive it should be left to complete its life cycle, protected from the attentions of over-enthusiastic collectors.

ENGLAND: DT HF L MM SD SE† SP SL† (SR) SY†.

WALES: A BR RA.

SCOTLAND: ED†.

The most favoured pabulum of the larva is the oak, whose thicker branches, crown, felled trunks and stumps it attacks; it is also known to affect other deciduous hardwoods, including beech, chestnut, elm, hornbeam and fruit trees. It has been found in pine (Fraser, 1948). It does less damage than the following species but is known to infest unstripped stacked wood.

It is host to a number of parasites, namely:—

Bracon truncorum Gour., *Chaeropachys colon* L., *Dibrachys cavus* Wlk., *Doryctes gallicus* Reich., *Ipobracon obscuripennis* Ths., *Neoxorides nitens* Grav., *Pyracmon xoridiformis* Hlgr., *P. xoridoides* Str., *Spathius rubidus* Rossi, *Xorides filiformis* Grav. and *X. praecatorius* F. Apart from those Hymenoptera, the larvae is also parasitised by the Diptera, *Billaea triangulifera* Zett. and possibly *Phryne vulgaris* Fall.

Metamorphosis varies between one and two years. Pupation usually occurs in March and April, eclosion taking place from then until June; but

should it be deferred until the late summer, then the beetle overwinters until the following year. During its transitory adult life the imago sometimes visits flowers, but it evidently prefers to stay basking in the sunshine near its host tree. No adults have been found in the open beyond June.

Like some other Cerambycids with strong mandibles, *sanguineum* has been known to bite its way through metal sheeting (Houlbert, 1912) and, in a laboratory, through a lead crucible (Laing, 1920); there is also a curious instance (Léveillé, 1897) of its eating through a pile of gelatine photographic plates.

The uncertainty about the status of *P. sanguineum* in Great Britain as to whether or not it was a native or an imported species is reflected in the British catalogues published over the last 150 years; ten such list it as indigenous, seven as an importation and two omit its name altogether. Unfortunately our latest catalogue (Kloet & Hincks, 1977) erroneously includes it as adventitious.

Phymatodes testaceus L.

A beetle that ranges from the base of the south-west peninsula, the south-east, the Home Counties, East Anglia, some western areas and the central Midlands but not beyond Cheshire and south Yorkshire and Lancashire.

ENGLAND: BD BK BX CB CH DM† DT DY EK EN ES EX GE GW HF HT IW L LN LR MX MY† NE NM NO NS NW OX SE SH SL SR ST SY WK WN WO WS WW WX.

WALES: GM.

SCOTLAND: ED†.

The larva usually attacks the branches, dead boles and unstripped logs of deciduous trees, but it also infests coniferous growths including apple, ash, beech, birch, blackthorn, elm, hazel, hemlock, *Hicoria*, hornbeam, horse chestnut, larch, maple, oak — its favourite host plant — pine, poplar, sour cherry and willow. On the Continent it damages hop poles and vine props. The larvae of *Trinophylum cribratum* Bates, an Indian Coleopteron which has established itself in English oak in a few localities, has been found to be also present in that tree where it is already heavily infested with *P. testaceus*.

The larva of the latter is host to nearly a score of Hymenopterous Ichneumonids and Braconids which include:—

Cheiopachys colon L., *Coelocentrus caligatus* Grav., *Doryctes gallicus* Reinh., *D. leucogaster* Nees, *Echthrus reluctator* L., *Ephialtes mesocentrus* Grav., *E. manifestator* L., *E. tenuiventris* Holmg., *E. tuberculatus* Fourcr., *Helcon carinator* Nees, *H. tardator* Nees, *Iphiaulax flavator* F., *Ischnocerus filicornis* Kriechb., *Neoxorides nitens* Grav., *Pteromalus bimaculatus* Rtz., *Spathius exarator* F., *S. ferrugatus* Gour., *Xorides filiformis* Grav., and *X. praecatorius* F.

Metamorphosis is variable; in suitable conditions it can be as short as one year; when they are adverse, it may extend to three winters. Pupation takes place from March until May, the perfect insect emerging, sometimes by the hundred, where the damage it causes is extensive, throughout the early summer until August. *P. testaceus* is at its commonest in the southern counties. It may be beaten off hawthorn but more frequently it settles on old posts and wood piles. Crepuscular by nature, the beetle usually shelters under the bark in daytime. It is attracted to light and entomologists' "sugar".

The insect is often imported into this country in unstripped logs and is of economic importance in the tan bark industry, where, although the damage it does may be superficial, it is nevertheless costly. *P. testaceus* has also bored through finished products such as oak planking and finished carpenters' stocks. A record from abroad relates how it gnawed its way through a bale of silk (Duffy, 1953).

The imago, which is drawn by Martyn (1792), is subject to considerable variation, colour forms which have been divided into three sections, viz., unicolourous testaceous, bicoloured yellow-brown and blue, and its blue, green and violet forms (Klausnitzer & Sander, 1981). Villiers (1978) categorises the varieties differently, describing 27 of them and illustrating a dozen. Many of them will occur in this country and in our collections: very few records have been published.

v. melanocephalus Ponza ENGLAND: BK IW LR.

v. analis Redt. ENGLAND: BK IW.

v. praeustus F.* ENGLAND: IW.

v. fennicus L.* ENGLAND: IW LR.

* Listed only in Crotch's 1863 British catalogue.

P. (Poecilium) alni L.

The distribution of this beetle is still rather patchy, ranging along the Channel coast, some of the Home Counties, Fenland, parts of the West Midlands and the north, but not farther than Cumberland; unrecorded from either Scotland or Ireland.

ENGLAND: BK CH CU DM DT DY EK ES EX GW HF HT HU IW L LR MM MX NH NW OX SD SE SH SR WK WN WO WS WX WW (WY).

WALES: DB.

The larval stage is spent in recently dead or decaying twigs, slender branches and freshly cut unstripped palings of alder, ash, aspen, chestnut, elm, fir, hazel, maple, oak (its preferred pabulum) and rose. Its only parasite is the Hymenopteron, *Spathius rubidus* Rossi.

Metamorphosis is usually completed within a year, but the life cycle sometimes extends to a two year period. Pupation takes place during the spring, the imagines emerging in April and May; thereafter, the beetle, which runs very swiftly, may be taken until August by sweeping or beating

bundles of faggots, hop and vine poles, hurdles, posts and railings, woodstacks, brambles, hawthorn, old oak scrub, in whose withered tops it will shelter, and rhododendrons.

A fairly common, pretty little beetle, causing the occasional infestation but not regarded as a serious pest, as many as 24 beetles have been found in a 25 cm. length of branch (Demelt, 1966).

The elytral fasciae vary considerably, ten forms of which are drawn by Villiers (1978). It is also depicted by Martyn (1792).

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Variation in *Adalia bipunctata* L. (Col.: Coccinellidae)

Each year some three to five per cent of the *Adalia bipunctata* L. coming out of hibernation turn out to be varieties, but at Kew during March 1990, the proportion of such varieties was much higher at 17% (six out of 36 specimens noted). These were three *quadrimaculata*, two *bar-annulata* and one *duodecempustulata*. — A.J. BALDWIN, 33 Defoe Avenue, Kew Gardens, Surrey TW9 4DS.

Eudonia mercurella (L.) (Lep.: Pyralidae) reared from Kidney Vetch

On 16th July 1988 the late Dr K.C. Greenwood found a larva in the seed-heads of Kidney Vetch, *Anthyllis vulneraria* L., at Harbury, Warwicks. He reared an imago therefrom, which emerged on 10th August and was later identified as *E. mercurella* by R.J. Barnett, then of the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum, Coventry, where the specimen now rests. This is a most extraordinary record, as the larva normally feeds on mosses (*vide* Emmet, 1988, *A Field Guide to the Smaller British Lepidoptera* 2nd ed.). — JOHN ROBBINS, 123b Parkgate Road, Coventry CV6 4GF.